
April 2009

Parent and Guardian Guide to California's 2008-09 Accountability Progress Reporting System

The primary goal of California's Accountability Progress Reporting (APR) system is to measure and report the academic achievement of California's 6.3 million public school students enrolled in nearly 10,000 schools in over 1,000 school districts and county offices of education. The system includes three major components:

- The Academic Performance Index (API) Report
- The Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Report
- The Program Improvement (PI) Report

The California Department of Education (CDE) prepares these reports on each school, school district, and county office of education. The reports are available on the CDE APR Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/apr/>.

API Report

The API Report is required by the state's Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) of 1999. This report shows how much a school is improving from year to year based on its API. A school's API is a number that ranges from 200 to 1000 and is calculated from the results for each school's students on statewide tests. The state has set 800 as the API target for all schools to meet. Schools that fall short of 800 are required to meet annual growth targets until that goal is achieved. API targets vary for each school.

The annual API growth target for a school is 5 percent of the difference between the school's API and the statewide performance target of 800 with a 5 point minimum. Schools that meet or exceed an 800 API are expected to maintain that level of achievement and to continue working to improve the academic performance of all students.

There are two API reports: (1) the Base API that is released to schools in the spring and (2) the Growth API that is released in August. These two reports show results from two different school years.

The Growth API is compared to the prior year Base API to show how much a school improved from one year to the next.

Schools must meet API growth targets for the whole school as well as for all "numerically significant" groups of students in the school (see explanation on page 2). Each Base API and Growth API Report includes the schoolwide API and the APIs for each numerically significant group of students. The Growth API Report determines whether schools met their targets.

If a school meets certain API participation and growth criteria, it may be eligible to become a California Distinguished School, National Blue Ribbon School, or Title I Academic Achievement Award School. If a school does not meet or exceed its growth targets and is ranked in the lower part of the statewide distribution of the Base API, it may be identified to participate in state intervention programs. These programs are designed to help the school improve its academic performance.

AYP Report

The AYP Report is required by the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. This report shows how well schools and school districts are meeting common standards of academic performance, as measured by whether the school or school district makes AYP. Required AYP targets increase yearly until 2013-14 when all schools must have 100 percent of their students performing at or above the proficient level on statewide tests. By law, all California schools and school districts receive annual AYP results.

Each year, schools and school districts must meet four sets of requirements to make AYP. The requirements reflect statewide performance levels and are the same for all schools and school districts of the same type (see table on next page).

The requirements include: (1) student participation rate on statewide tests; (2) percentage of students scoring at the proficient level or above in English-language arts and mathematics on statewide tests; (3) API Growth; and (4) graduation rate (if high school students are enrolled). Numerically significant groups of students at a school or school district also must meet participation rate and percent proficient requirements.

Statewide AYP Requirements for 2008-09 School Year

Type of School or LEA	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient in English-Language Arts	Percent Proficient in Mathematics	API Growth	Graduation Rate (if high school students enrolled)
Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, and Elementary School Districts	95%	46.0%	47.5%	650 or 1 point growth	N/A
High Schools and High School Districts (with grades 9-12)		44.5%	43.5%		83.1% or +0.1% one-year change or +0.2% two-year change
Unified School Districts, High School Districts, and County Offices of Education (with grades 2-8 and 9-12)		45.0%	45.5%		

These 2008-09 AYP requirements reflect increases from the prior year. AYP targets will continue to increase annually until 2013-14.

Numerically Significant Student Groups

To be considered numerically significant (large enough) for the API or AYP, a student group must include at least 100 students or at least 50 students who make up 15 percent or more of the school's total population. Results of numerically significant groups of students for the API and AYP are calculated for the following categories:

- African American (not of Hispanic origin)
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Filipino
- Hispanic or Latino
- Pacific Islander

- White (not of Hispanic origin)
- Socioeconomically Disadvantaged
- English Learners
- Students with Disabilities

PI Report

The PI Report supplements the AYP Report by providing information on the PI status of schools and school districts. A school or school district that receives federal Title I, Part A, Basic, funds is subject to identification for PI if it does not make AYP for two years in a row. A school identified for PI must notify its parents and guardians about its PI status and offer certain types of required services during each year that it is a PI school. A school is eligible to exit PI if it makes AYP for two years in a row. Information about PI reports and identification is located on the CDE AYP Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ayp/>. Information about PI required services and/or interventions is located on the CDE PI Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ti/programimprov.asp>.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do API or AYP calculations affect a student's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program or California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) score report?

No. API and AYP results are calculated for state, school district, and school level reports only.

How can parents or guardians help to improve a school's accountability results?

The best way to improve a school's accountability results is for student achievement on statewide tests to improve. Parents can help by supporting their school's efforts in providing classroom instruction and assessments that are aligned to the California content standards and by ensuring students are well-rested and nourished on statewide testing days.

More Information

To obtain information about state and federal accountability requirements and the API, AYP, and PI reports, parents and guardians should contact their school or school district office during regular hours. Additional information is available on the CDE APR Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/apr/>.